

MISSISSIPPI WIRELESS COMMUNICATION COMMISSION

May 1, 2008 Meeting Minutes

Place: MDOT Auditorium

Commission Members Present:

MS Department of Corrections
MS Department of Information Technology Services
MS Department of Transportation
MS Dept of Public Safety
MS Department of Environmental Quality
MS Department of Homeland Security
MS Supervisors Association
MS Department of Health
MS Highway Patrol
MS National Guard

Chris Epps
David Litchliter
Willie Huff
Stephen Simpson
Keith Harkins
Jay Ledbetter
Joel Yelverton
Mike Scales
Michael Berthay
Brig. Gen. William Freeman
and Gary Ladd
Mike Womack
Tom Lariviere

MS Emergency Management Agency
MS Fire Chiefs' Association

Advisory Members Present:

Representative Tyrone Ellis
Senator Nolan Mettetal
Senator Nickey Browning
Senator Dean Kirby

Chairman Chris Epps called the meeting to order at 1:30 PM and called for a motion to approve the minutes of the last meeting. Mike Womack made the motion, and it was seconded by Tom Lariviere. The motion passed with none opposed. Chairman Epps recognized the new advisory members in attendance: Senator Dean Kirby, Senator Nolan Mettetal, and Senator Nickey Browning. He also recognized the new Commissioner of the Department of Public Safety Stephen Simpson and the new Adjutant General William Freeman.

Joel Yelverton reported for the Procurement Review Committee. There were no new requests submitted for approval. The committee has received comments on the proposed procurement guidelines, and there will be wording changes to reflect those comments. The committee will present the proposal to the commission at the next meeting. Mr. Yelverton read an email from Desoto County praising the statewide MSWIN contract for saving them \$52,000 on the procurement request approved last month.

The report for the Interoperability Committee was combined with the report for the Governance Committee.

Willie Huff reported for the Governance Committee. He presented a slide presentation detailing the benefits for subscribers on the MSWIN system and how other entities will join the system. The Commission needs to discuss user fees and how credits for infrastructure built by the local entities might be applied. Mr. Huff reminded the Commission that the user fees will not pay cover all of the operational costs of the system and that other revenue sources need to be considered. The fees may be assessed on a per radio per year basis. Chairman Epps questioned if any other states charged fees on a per agency basis. Mr. Huff stated that they did not find any. There was a discussion about how the current fees paid by local agencies would compare to what they would pay for the MSWIN system and how other states with user fees

make up the difference for the cost of the system. Mr. Huff stated that general funds are used to cover the remaining costs of the system in some other states. Mr. Womack questioned if the WCC would go to the legislature yearly to request the balance not paid by the fees. Mr. Huff stated that it would. Representative Ellis questioned who has conducted the needs assessment for the counties and agencies. Mr. Huff answered that this has not been done since it will be specific for each user. Representative Ellis stated that it needs to be done in order to show the benefits of the system. Chairman Epps stated that the Commission should meet with the counties as the system moves into their areas to talk with them about their ability to pay the fees. Representative Ellis stated that the WCC should get a business model ready for the counties that are ready to come on the system. Mr. Harkins requested the documentation from the other states. Mr. Huff stated that he would provide it to him.

Bill Buffington gave a project update. The WCC staff is working with the local agencies to obtain grants for them. They are also working with the Phase I counties to blend their systems with MSWIN. There are currently eighteen sites of equipment in Mississippi, and steel has been ordered for the towers. The shelters for the sites have been reviewed and shipped. Site lock is complete on 70 sites, and site selection is 2/3 complete. Representative Ellis questioned if the grant would only be for the local agencies, how much it would be, and how it would be distributed. Mr. Buffington stated that \$8 million of the \$10.9 million grant is earmarked for local agencies. Right now the funds have not been received, and the method of distribution has not been determined. Mr. Buffington stated that we are also working on a process for the locals to aggregate their requests for long term financing. Representative Ellis stated that the WCC needs to draft a document detailing its needs so the legislators can talk to the congressmen about more money. Mr. Womack stated that he and Mr. Ledbetter would be happy to share their expertise with these types of grants. He also stated that the distribution of the funds should be population based. Mr. Yelverton questioned who would make the decision as to how the funds are distributed. Mr. Buffington stated that Mr. Ledbetter's office and the WCC would make that decision.

Chairman Epps distributed a draft of proposed bylaws for the WCC. He requested that the Commission members review the bylaws and give him feed back via email before the next meeting. The WCC will adopt bylaws in June.

Chairman Epps stated that there was a need to go into closed session to determine the need for executive session regarding employment of persons in specific WCC positions. Mr. Litchliter made the motion to convene in closed session to determine the need for executive session. It was seconded by Mike Womack and passed with none opposed.

The determination for executive session was discussed in closed session. Mr. Ledbetter made a motion to convene in executive session to discuss employment of persons in specific WCC positions. The motion was seconded by Mr. Litchliter and passed with none opposed.

The WCC convened in executive session and took the following actions in executive session and reported those actions when the commission returned in open session. These actions were unanimously approved.

- (1) Name Bill Roach, ITS, Interim Executive Officer of the WCC.
- (2) Name a personnel committee (to be named by the WCC Chairman) to begin a search for a permanent WCC Director.
- (3) Advertise for a Technical Consultant to augment the state MSWIN project team, in compliance with all state purchasing laws.

Mr. Litchliter handed out a report of the monthly expenditures. Total expenses for April were \$25,709.17, and income from interest was \$21,606.30. He reminded everyone that operational expenses may be reported to the WCC after payment, while non-routine expenses should be approved by the Commission before payment. Two non-operational expenses occurred in April: \$97,047.01 to Buford Goff at and \$433,697.00 to Motorola for site selection services. Mr. Huff made a motion to acknowledge and approve payment of the bills. Mr. Harkins seconded the motion, and it passed with none opposed.

The next meeting will be June 5, 2008, in the MDOT auditorium at 1:30 PM.

Meeting adjourned at 3:50 PM.